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POEMS TO JANETHE

LANDOR



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*IANTHE*



POEMS TO IANTHE

by

Walter Savage Landor

*Arranged, with an Introduction and Notes, by*

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## *Acknowledgment*

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From *Letters and Unpublished Writings of Walter Savage Landor* edited by Stephen Wheeler:

The portrait of Ianthe.

ii. "Can not you make the name of Jane

xxxvii. Now thou art gone, tho' not gone far

lviii. Poplar! I will not write upon thy rind

lxv. Bid my bosom cease to grieve

lxxv. If I am proud, you surely know

lxxix. To thee, Maria, now within thy tomb

lxxxii. Dreamer I ever was by night and day

lxxxvii. The violets of thine eyes are faded

lxxxviii. For me you wish you could retain

From *Life of Landor by Sidney Colvin (English Men of Letters Series)*:

iii. Sometimes, as boys will do, I play'd at love



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## *Introduction*

### i

At an unknown date between the years 1795 and 1798 Walter Savage Landor met Sophia Jane Swift at Clifton in South Wales. To her, according to the story told in Nos. ii and iii of this collection, Landor gave the name Ianthe. Their friendship, which ripened into love on Landor's part at least, endured for the remainder of their lives. Whether or not Landor seriously proposed marriage is not known. If he did, his suit was rejected; for in 1803 Ianthe married her cousin Godwin Swift. During the next twenty-six years Landor dropped out of Ianthe's life. In 1816, Swift having died in 1814, Ianthe married Count Lepelletier de Molande, a Norman nobleman who had emigrated to England. Eleven years later she was again a widow. In the meanwhile Landor had married and had established himself in a villa near Florence. To Florence went Ianthe and her children in 1829. The romance of their second meeting is portrayed in No. lxxiv, a meeting which renewed their previous friendship and rejuvenated Landor's love for her. In 1832 Landor returned her visit by spending a few days at her home in Brighton. Throughout these years she had many suitors for her hand, among them the Duc de Luxemburg; but she would have none of them. During the latter part of Ianthe's life, Landor saw her at intervals at Bath; for he was at this time separated from his family. However, the old intimacy was never renewed, and Landor was a worshipper from afar. Her death at Versailles in the latter part of July, 1851, brought from Landor one of the most poignantly sorrowful lyrics in all English poetry.

The poems addressed to Ianthe fall into three distinct groups: first, those written during the time of Landor's first love for Ianthe and of his dejection at the failure of his suit (i - lxxiii); second, those written to Ianthe in after years (lxxiv - lxxxviii); third, those written upon Ianthe's death (lxxxix - xci).

The love story as told in the poems seems to show that at the outset Landor received great encouragement and had some reason to believe his affection was returned. Then followed a visit by Ianthe across "the sea"; where or for what purpose we do not know. During this time Landor anxiously awaited her return, only to find when she did come back, that her heart had been bestowed elsewhere. The poems written after this event portray how keenly he felt the loss of one he loved so well. In time his grief abated and he was able to view those years of love more placidly.

The poems written to Ianthe after 1829 show that the old love had reawakened to burn for the remainder of his life in a sober, steady flame, a love not passionate but calm and reflecting. For him Ianthe had lost none of her charm. His poems to her daughter are but opportunities to cast a reflected glory upon her. His devotion is that of the man who wrote *Pericles and Aspasia*.

The last few poems which he wrote upon the death of Ianthe make a fitting ending to this love of Landor's which had endured for fifty years and more. They serve to show that the earlier poems, expressed as they sometimes were with the crudeness of youth and affectations learned from earlier poets, were based on no mere flirtation. Landor felt her death deeply and genuinely mourned her passing; but he found his consolation in the thought that he had given her immortality among mortals:

*One name, Ianthe, shall not die.*

This, in brief, is the record of the spiritual story of Landor and Ianthe. Beginning with all the ve-



hemenace of youthful passion, it developed gradually into Platonic devotion which, on the part of Landor at all events, was as genuine as the great philosopher could have desired.

iii

This little volume is the first attempt to bring together and arrange the poems written to Ianthe. In 1831 Landor published as part of a volume of poems thirty-one lyrics which he specifically called *Poems Addressed to Ianthe*. In the notes I have indicated which poems these are. In addition to these I have tried to include all the poems which Landor wrote in which the name Ianthe appears. Nine more were added from a collection of hitherto unpublished writings of Landor which Mr. Stephen Wheeler published in 1897; and one was taken from Mr. Sidney Colvin's *Life of Landor*. The remaining thirty-three poems were found in the poet's works and are included wholly on the basis of interpretation.

The inclusion of the last group is, of course, the most difficult to defend. For seven of them I have the assistance of Mr. Colvin's interpretation in maintaining their presence. For the remainder I can only plead that internal evidence seems to point to their having been written in connection with the Ianthe story. Date of publication is of no importance, for some of the earliest poems Landor published in his last volumes. Consequently, with a very real knowledge of the hazards of internal evidence and implied interpretation, and with the hope that later studies will verify my conclusions with facts, I have ventured to include them.

I have arranged the poems in an order which I think will make them tell their own story. Here again the failure of Landor to connect his poems to Ianthe in any particular manner, has added to the burden of risk for the editor. By placing them in what seems to be a proper chronological order and by matching like content with like content, I have made an arrangement

which appears plausible. For this reason I have broken up the little collection of thirty-one which Landor published as a unit and placed them in their proper places in this larger edition. They all, with one exception, fall among the poems which deal with the early years and his first love. The exception is the last poem in this book. As Landor placed it last in his group, so I have placed it last in this collection; for it fits its position admirably.

In the last analysis, although an editor may do much for an author by logical arrangement and intelligent annotation, whatever of truth and beauty is present in the work is the author's, and on him its merit depends. Landor has immortalized Ianthe, but in the portrayal of his love he has also memorialized himself forever.

*The touch of Love dispels the gloom  
Of life, and animates the tomb;  
But never let it idly flare  
On gazers in the open air,  
Nor turn it quite away from one  
To whom it serves for moon and sun,  
And who alike in night and day  
Without it could not find his way.*



*POEMS TO IANTHE*

*Written at sundry times*  
*by*  
*Walter Savage Landor*



## POEMS TO IANTHE

### i

Away my verse; and never fear,  
As men before such beauty do;  
On you she will not look severe,  
She will not turn her eyes from you.  
Some happier graces could I lend  
That in her memory you should live,  
Some little blemishes might blend,  
For it would please her to forgive.

### ii

#### *Ianthe's Name*

'Cannot you make my name of Jane  
Sound pleasanter? Now try again,'  
Said she. At once I thought about  
The matter, and at last cut out  
A letter from Greek alphabet,  
And had it, as I thought, well set;  
'Twas then 'lanthe.' Soon there came  
A smart ring'd robber with a claim,  
You find it in his wardrobe stil,  
More he would have, but never will.

Sometimes, as boys will do, I play'd at love,  
 Nor fear'd cold weather, nor withdrew in hot;  
 And two who were my playmates at that hour,  
 Hearing me call'd a poet, in some doubt  
 Challenged me to adapt their names to song.  
 Ione was the first; her name is heard  
 Among the hills of Cambria, north and south,  
 But there of shorter stature, like herself;  
 I placed a comedy vowel at its close,  
 And drove an ugly sibilant away.



Ianthe, who came later, smiled and said,  
 I have two names and will be praised in both;  
 Sophia is not quite enough for me,  
 And you have simply named it, and but once.  
 Now call the other up—



I went, and planted in a fresh parterre  
 Ianthe; it was blooming, when a youth  
 Leapt o'er the hedge, and snatching at the stem  
 Broke off the label from my favourite flower,  
 And stuck it on a sorrier of his own.



Thou hast not rais'd, lanthe, such desire  
 In any breast as thou hast rais'd in mine.  
 No wandering meteor now, no marshy fire,  
 Leads on my steps, but lofty, but divine:  
 And, if thou chillest me, as chill thou dost  
 When I approach too near, too boldly gaze,  
 So chills the blushing morn, so chills the host  
 Of vernal stars, with light more chaste than day's.

Darling shell, where hast thou been,  
 West or East? or heard or seen?  
 From what pastimes art thou come?  
 Can we make amends at home?

Whether thou hast tuned the dance  
 To the maids of ocean  
 Know I not; but Ignorance  
 Never hurts Devotion.

This I know, lanthe's shell,  
 I must ever love thee well,  
 Tho' too little to resound  
 While the Nereids dance around:

For, of all the shells that are,  
 Thou art sure the brightest;  
 Thou, lanthe's infant care,  
 Most these eyes delightest.

To thy early aid she owes  
 Teeth like budding snowdrop rows:  
 And what other shell can say  
 On her bosom once it lay?

That which into Cyprus bore  
 Venus from her native sea,  
 (Pride of shells!) was never more  
 Dear to her than thou to me.

Past ruin'd Iliion Helen lives,  
 Alcestis rises from the shades;  
 Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives  
 Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil  
 Hide all the peopled hills you see,  
 The gay, the proud, while lovers hail  
 These many summers you and me.

The tear for fading beauty check,  
 For passing glory cease to sigh,  
 One form shall rise above the wreck,  
 One name, Ianthe, shall not die.

From heaven descend two gifts alone;  
 The graceful line's eternal zone  
 And Beauty, that too soon must die.  
 Exposed and lonely Genius stands,  
 Like Memnon in the Egyptian sands,  
 At whom barbarian javelins fly.

For mutual succour heaven designed  
 The lovely form and vigorous mind  
 To seek each other and unite.  
 Genius! thy wing shall beat down Hate,  
 And Beauty tell her fears at Fate  
 Until her rescuer met her sight.

Soon, O Ianthe! life is o'er,  
 And sooner beauty's heavenly smile:  
 Grant only (and I ask no more),  
 Let love remain that little while.

## ix

The heart you cherish can not change;  
 The fancy, faint and fond,  
 Has never more the wish to range  
 Nor power to rise beyond.

## x

Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,  
 Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever;  
 From you, lanthe, little troubles pass  
 Like little ripples down a sunny river.

## xi

Come back, ye Smiles, that late forsook  
 Each breezy path and ferny nook.  
 Come Laughter, though the sage hath said  
 Thou favourest most the thoughtless head:  
 I blame thee not, howe'er inclin'd  
 To love the vacant easy mind;  
 But now am ready, may it please,  
 That mine be vacant and at ease.

Sweet children of celestial breed,  
 Be ruled by me . . . repress your speed.  
 Laughter, though Momus gave thee birth,  
 And said, *My darling, stay on earth!*  
 Smiles, though from Venus you arise,  
 And live for ever in the skies!  
 Softly! and let not one descend  
 But first alights upon my friend.  
 When one upon her cheek appears,  
 A thousand spring to life from hers;  
 Death smites his disappointed urn,  
 And spirit, pleasure, wit, return.

*To Ianthe*  
*With Petrarca's Sonnets*

Behold what homage to his idol paid  
The tuneful suppliant of Valcluca's shade.  
His verses still the tender heart engage,  
They charm'd a rude, and please a polisht age:  
Some are to nature and to passion true,  
And all had been so, had he lived for you.

My basil, to whose fragrance, from the breast  
Of Venus, even the myrtle bends her head,  
Say that I broke upon thy sunny rest  
And dreams perhaps by quiet fancies fed,

Not thoughtless nor in malice; the desire  
That courtly hands should take thee, prompted  
mine.

His only daughter thus some country squire  
Sends to her town-bred cousins, spruce and fine:

He looks for something . . can it then be grace?  
The want that wounds it, softens too his heart;  
The blushes leave his clear bald brow apace,  
And the stiff steed in bearded pride may start.

It often comes into my head  
That we may dream when we are dead,  
But I am far from sure we do.  
O that it were so! then my rest  
Would be indeed among the blest;  
I should for ever dream of you.

She I love (alas in vain!)  
 Floats before my slumbering eyes:  
 When she comes she lulls my pain,  
 When she goes what pangs arise!  
 Thou whom love, whom memory flies,  
 Gentle Sleep! prolong thy reign!  
 If even thus she soothe my sighs,  
 Never let we wake again!

*To My Watch*

Go, sole companion of a joyless bed,  
 Nor drive the slumbers from this frantic head.  
 Point not how slow malignant Time departs,  
 How ill agree thy motion and my heart's.  
 Why so averse, ye hours, to Cambria's coast?  
 Why cannot sleep still hang o'er treasures lost,  
 And let me dream that, meeting on the way,  
 lanthe chides, as once, my long delay!  
 "Ah, why this absence! why, when men possess,  
 Hold they the gift, but love the giver less!  
 Perhaps some rival I have lived to see,  
 Or hear some other youth has charms for me.  
 No, in this bosom none shall ever share,  
 Firm is, and tranquil be, your empire there!  
 If, wing'd with amorous fear, the unfetter'd slave  
 Stole back for you the heart she rashly gave,  
 O call it feeble, call it not untrue. .  
 Its destination, though it fail'd, was you.  
 So, to some distant ile, the unconscious dove  
 Bears at her breast the billet dear to love,  
 But drops, while viewless lies the happier scene,  
 On some hard rock or desert beach between."

## xvii

Could but the dream of night return by day,  
 And thus again the true lanthe say,  
 "Altho' some other I should live to see  
 As fond, no other can have charms for me.  
 No, in this bosom none shall ever share,  
 Firm is, and tranquil be, your empire there!  
 If wing'd with amorous fear the unfetter'd slave  
 Stole back the struggling heart she rashly gave,  
 Weak, they may call it, weak, but not untrue;  
 Its destination, though it fail'd, was you.  
 So to some distant isle the unconscious dove  
 Bears at her breast the billet dear to love,  
 But drops, while viewless lies the happier scene,  
 On some hard rock or desert beach between."

## xviii

I love to hear that men are bound  
 By your enchanting links of sound:  
 I love to hear that none rebel  
 Against your beauty's silent spell.  
 I know not whether I may bear  
 To see it all, as well as hear;  
 And never shall I clearly know  
 Unless you nod and tell me so.

## xix

These are the sights I love to see:  
 I love to see around  
 Youths breathing hard on bended knee,  
 Upon that holy ground  
 My flowers have covered: all the while  
 I stand above the rest;  
 I feel within the angelic smile,  
 I bless, and I am blest.

## xx

O thou whose happy pencil strays  
 Where I am call'd, nor dare to gaze,  
 But lower my eye and check my tongue;  
 O, if thou valuest peaceful days,  
 Pursue the ringlet's sunny maze,  
 And dwell not on those lips too long.  
 What mists athwart my temples fly,  
 Now, touch by touch, thy fingers tie  
 With torturing care her graceful zone!  
 For all that sparkles from her eye  
 I could not look while thou art by,  
 Nor could I cease were I alone.

## xxi

Flow, precious tears! thus shall my rival know  
 For me, not him, ye flow.  
 Stay, precious tears! ah stay! this jealous heart  
 Would bid you flow apart,  
 Lest he should see you rising o'er the brim,  
 And hope you rise for him.  
 Your secret cells, while he is present, keep,  
 Nor, tho' I'm absent, weep.

## xxii

Will you not come, my little girl!  
 What on this sand-hill can I do?  
 What, but around my finger twirl  
 The sever'd lock I stole from you?  
 Come, or the wanton wind shall have it,  
 And every whispering breeze shall tell  
 How, when you snatcht it back, you gave it,  
 And pouted that you snatcht so well.

While the winds whistle round my cheerless room,  
And the pale morning droops with winter's gloom;  
While indistinct lie rude and cultured lands,  
The ripening harvest and the hoary sands;  
Alone, and destitute of every page  
That fires the poet or informs the sage,  
Where shall my wishes, where my fancy, rove,  
Rest upon past or cherish promised love?  
Alas! the past I never can regain,  
Wishes may rise and tears my flow . . . in vain.  
Fancy, that brings her in her earthly bloom,  
Throws barren sunshine o'er the unyielding tomb.  
What then would passion, what would reason, do?  
Sure, to retrace is worse than to pursue.  
Here will I sit till heaven shall cease to lour  
And happier Hesper bring the appointed hour,  
Gaze on the mingled waste of sky and sea,  
Think of my love, and bid her think of me.



Retired this hour from wondering crowds  
And flower-fed poets swathed in clouds,  
Now the dull dust is blown away,  
lanthe, list to what I say.  
Verse is not always sure to please  
For lightness, readiness, and ease;  
Romantic ladies like it not  
Unless its steams are strong and hot  
As Melton-Mowbray stables when  
Ill-favoured frost comes back again.  
Tell me no more you feel a pride  
To be for ever at my side,  
To think your beauty will be read  
When all who pine for it are dead.  
I hate a pomp and a parade  
Of what should ever rest in shade;  
What not the slenderest ray should reach,  
Nor whispered breath of guarded speech:  
There even Memory should sit  
Absorbed, and almost doubting it.

Clifton! in vain thy varied scenes invite,  
The mossy bank, dim glade, and dizzy hight;  
The sheep that, starting from the tufted thyme,  
Untune the distant church's mellow chime,  
As o'er each limb a gentle horror creeps,  
And shakes above our heads the craggy steeps.  
Pleasant I've thought it to pursue the rower  
While light and darkness seize the changeful oar,  
The frolic Naiads drawing from below  
A net of silver round the black canoe.  
Now the last lonely solace must it be  
To watch pale evening brood o'er land and sea,  
Then join my friends and let those friends believe  
My cheeks are moisten'd by the dews of eve.  
What voice can charm us, or what view can cheer,  
Removed from her the restless heart holds dear?  
Ah, why then, self-tormentor, why removed?  
Say, thou who lovest, art thou not beloved?  
Resume thy courage, give thy sorrows o'er—  
Will not her bosom press thy bosom more?  
Her clasping arms around thy neck entwine,  
Her gentle hands be linkt again in thine?  
Will not her lips again their honied dews impart,  
And will not rapture swell her answering heart?  
Soon shall thy exile, and thy grief be closed,  
By whom but thee, for whom but her, imposed.  
Through seven days, imperfect, waste and wild,  
In seven days the whole creation smiled.

## xxvi

Circe, who bore the diadem  
 O'er every head we see,  
 Pursued by thousands, turn'd from them  
 And fill'd her cup for me.

She seiz'd what little was design'd  
 To catch a transient view;  
 For thee alone she left behind  
 The tender and the true.

## xxvii

All tender thoughts that e'er possess  
 The human brain or human breast,  
 Centre in mine for thee . . .  
 Excepting one . . . and that must thou  
 Contribute: come, confer it now:  
*Grateful* I fain would be.

## xxviii

*Twelfth-Night*

I draw with trembling hand my doubtful lot;  
 Yet where are Fortune's frowns if she frown not  
 From whom I hope, from whom I fear, the kiss?  
 O gentle Love! if there be aught beyond  
 That makes the bosom calm, but leaves it fond,  
 O let her give me that, and take back this!

xxix

If mutable is she I love,  
If rising doubts demand their place,  
I would adjure them not to move  
Beyond her fascinating face.

Let it be question'd, while there flashes  
A liquid light of fleeting blue,  
Whether it leaves the eyes or lashes,  
Plays on the surface or peeps through.

With every word let there appear  
So modest yet so sweet a smile,  
That he who hopes must gently fear,  
Who fears may fondly hope the while.

xxx

A time will come when absence, grief, and years,  
Shall change the form and voice that please you  
now,  
When you perplex shall ask, "And fell my tears  
Into his bosom? breath'd I there my vow?"

It must be so, lanthe! but to think  
Malignant Fate should also threaten *you*,  
Would make my heart, now vainly buoyant, sink:  
Believe it not: 'Tis what I'll never do.

"Remember you the guilty night,"  
 A dying myrtle said,  
 "You snatcht and seized me pale with fright?"  
 She paused; I bowed my head.  
 "At every swell more close I prest  
 With jealous care that lovely breast:  
 Of every tender word afraid  
 I cast a broader, deeper shade,  
 And trembled so, I fell between  
 Two angel-guards by you unseen. .  
 Or else your hand had never dared  
 To strip me from their holy ward. .  
 There, pleasures, perils, all forgot,  
 I clung and fainted . . who would not?  
 Yet certainly, this transport over,  
 I should, for who would not? recover.  
 Yes! I was destined to return  
 And sip anew the crystal urn,  
 Where, with four other sister sprays,  
 I bloom'd away my pleasant days.  
 But less and less, and less again,  
 Each day, hour, moment, is the pain  
 My little shrivell'd heart endures. .  
 Now can you say the same for yours?  
 I torn from her, and she from you,  
 That wiser thing can either do,  
 Than with our joys our fears renounce  
 And leave the vacant world at once?  
 When she you fondly love must go,  
 Your pangs will rise, but mine will cease.  
 I never shall awake to woe,  
 Nor you to happiness or peace."

## xxxii

One pansy, one, she bore beneath her breast,  
 A broad white ribbon held that pansy tight.  
 She waved about nor lookt upon the rest,  
 Costly and rare; on this she bent her sight.  
 I watcht her raise it gently when it droopt;  
 I knew she wisht to show it me; I knew  
 She would I saw it rise, to lie unloopt  
 Nearer its home, that tender heart! that true!

## xxxiii

You see the worst of love, but not the best,  
 Nor will you know him till he comes your guest.  
 Tho' yearly drops some feather from his sides,  
 In the heart's temple his pure torch abides.

## xxxiv

She leads in solitude her youthful hours,  
 Her nights are restless, her days are pain.  
 O when will Health and Pleasure come again,  
 Adorn her brow and strew her path with flowers,  
 And wandering wit relume the roseate bowers,  
 And turn and trifle with his festive train?  
 Grant me, O grant me this wish, ye heavenly  
 Powers!  
 All other hope, all other wish, restrain.

## xxxv

Have I, this moment, led thee from the beach  
 Into the boat? now far beyond my reach!  
 Stand there a little while, and wave once more  
 That kerchief; but may none upon the shore  
 Dare think the fond salute was meant for him!  
 Dizzily on the plashing water swim  
 My heavy eyes, and sometimes can attain  
 Thy lovely form, which tears bear off again.  
 In vain have they now ceast; it now is gone  
 Too far for sight, and leaves me here alone.  
 O could I hear the creaking of the mast!  
 I curst it present, I regret it past.

## xxxvi

Ianthe! you are call'd to cross the sea!  
 A path forbidden *me!*  
 Remember, while the Sun his blessing sheds  
 Upon the mountain-heads,  
 How often we have watcht him laying down  
 His brow, and dropt own own  
 Against each other's, and how faint and short  
 And sliding the support!  
 What will succeed it now? Mine is unblest,  
 Ianthe! nor will rest  
 But on the very thought that swells with pain.  
 O bid me hope again!  
 O give me back what Earth, what (without you)  
 Not Heaven itself can do,  
 One of the golden days that we have past;  
 And let it be my last!  
 Or else the gift would be, however sweet,  
 Fragile and incomplete.

xxxvii

*The Lover*

Now thou art gone, tho' not gone far,  
It seems that there are worlds between us;  
Shine here again, thou wandering star!  
Earth's planet! and return with Venus.

At times thou broughtest me thy light  
When restless sleep had gone away;  
At other times more blessed night  
Stole over, and prolonged thy stay.

xxxviii

I often ask upon whose arm she leans,  
She whom I dearly love,  
And if she visit much the crowded scenes  
Where mimic passions move.  
There, mighty powers! assert your just controul,  
Alarm her thoughtless breast,  
Breathe soft suspicion o'er her yielding soul,  
But never break its rest.  
O let some faithful lover, absent long,  
To sudden bliss return;  
Then Landor's name shall tremble from her tongue,  
Her cheek thro' tears shall burn.



I sadden while I view again  
 Smiles that for me the Graces wreathed.  
 Sure my last kiss those lips retain  
 And breathe the very vow they breathed;

At peace, in sorrow, far or near,  
 Constant and fond she still would be,  
 And absence should the more endear  
 The sigh it only woke for me.

Till the slow hours have past away,  
 Sweet image, bid my bosom rest.  
 Vain hope! yet shalt thou night and day,  
 Sweet image, to this heart be prest.

Pleasure! why thus desert the heart  
 In its spring-tide?  
 I could have seen her, I could part,  
 And but have sigh'd!

O'er every youthful charm to stray,  
 To gaze, to touch . .  
 Pleasure! why take so much away,  
 Or give so much!

Here, ever since you went abroad,  
 If there be change, no change I see,  
 I only walk our wonted road,  
 The road is only walkt by me.

Yes; I forgot; a change there is;  
 Was it of *that* you bade me tell?  
 I catch at times, at times I miss  
 The sight, the tone, I know so well.

Only two months since you stood here!  
 Two shortest months! then tell me why  
 Voices are harsher than they were,  
 And tears are longer ere they dry.

Along this coast I led the vacant Hours  
 To the lone sunshine on the uneven strand,  
 And nipt the stubborn grass and jucier flowers  
 With one unconscious inobservant hand,  
 While crept the other by degrees more near  
 Until it rose the cherisht form around,  
 And prest it closer, only that the ear  
 Might lean, and deeper drink some half-heard  
 sound.

Pursuits! alas, I now have none,  
But idling where were once pursuits,  
Often, all morning quite alone,  
I sit upon those twisted roots  
Which rise above the grass, and shield  
Our harebell, when the churlish year  
Catches her coming first afield,  
And she looks pale tho' spring is near;  
I chase the violets, that would hide  
Their little prudish heads away,  
And argue with the rills, that chide  
When we discover them at play.

As round the parting ray the busy notes  
 In eddying circles play'd,  
 Some little bird threw dull and broken notes  
 Amid an elder's shade.

My soul was tranquil as the scene around,  
 Lanthe at my side;  
 Both leaning silent on the turfy mound,  
 Lowly and soft and wide.

I had not lookt, that evening, for the part  
 One hand could disengage,  
 To make her arms cling round me, with a start  
 My bosom must assuage:

Silence and soft inaction please as much  
 Sometimes the stiller breast,  
 Which passion now has thrill'd with milder touch  
 And love in peace possess.

"Hark! hear you not the nightingale?" I said,  
 To strike her with surprise.  
 "The nightingale?" she cried, and raised her head,  
 And beam'd with brighter eyes.

"Before you said 'twas he that piped above,  
 At every thrilling swell  
 He pleas'd me more and more; he sang of love  
 So plaintively, so well."

Where are ye, happy days, when every bird  
 Pour'd love in every strain?  
 Ye days, when true was every idle word,  
 Return, return again!

Where alders rise up dark and dense  
 But just behind the wayside fence,  
 A stone there is in yonder nook  
 Which once I borrow'd of the brook:  
 You sate beside me on that stone,  
 Rather (not much) too wide for one.  
 Untoward stone! and never quite  
 (Tho' often very near it) right,  
 And putting to sore shifts my wit  
 To roll it out, then steady it,  
 And then to prove that it must be  
 Too hard for anyone but me.  
 Ianthe, haste! ere June declines  
 We'll write upon it all these lines.

*Ianthe's Letter*

We will not argue, if you say  
 My sorrows when I went away  
     Were not for you alone;  
 For there were many very dear,  
 Altho' at dawn they came not near,  
 As you did, yet who griev'd when I was gone.  
 We will not argue (but why tell  
     So false a tale?) that scarcely fell  
     My tears were mostly due.  
 I can not think who told you so:  
 I shed (about the rest I know  
 Nothing at all) the first and last for you.

You tell me I must come again  
 Now buds and blooms appear:  
 Ah! never fell one word in vain  
 Of yours on mortal ear.  
 You say the birds are busy now  
 In hedgerow, brake, and grove,  
 And slant their eyes to find the bough  
 That best conceals their love:  
 How many warble from the spray!  
 How many on the wing!  
 "Yet, yet," say you, "one voice away  
 I miss the sound of spring."  
 How little could that voice express,  
 Beloved, when we met!  
 But other sounds hath tenderness,  
 Which neither shall forget.

Thank Heaven, Ianthe, once again  
 Our hands and ardent lips shall meet,  
 And Pleasure, to assert his reign,  
 Scatter ten thousand kisses sweet:  
 Then cease repeating while you mourn,  
 "I wonder when he will return."

Ah wherefore should you so admire  
 The flowing words that fill my song,  
 Why call them artless, yet require  
 "Some promise from that tuneful tongue?"  
 I doubt if heaven itself could part  
 A tuneful tongue and tender heart.

xlix

Yes, we shall meet (I knew we should) again,  
And I am solaced now you tell me when.  
Joy sprung o'er sorrow as the morning broke,  
And, as I read the words, I thought you spoke.  
Altho' you bade it, yet to find how fast  
My spirits rose, how lightly grief flew past,  
I blush at every tear I have repress,  
And one is starting to reprove the rest.

l

Soon as lanthe's lip I prest,  
Thither my spirit wing'd its way:  
Ah, there the wanton would not rest!  
Ah, there the wanderer could not stay!

li

I held her hand, the pledge of bliss,  
Her hand that trembled and withdrew;  
She bent her head before my kiss . . .  
My heart was sure that hers was true.  
Now I have told her I must part,  
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,  
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart!  
Hers never was the heart for you.

lii

Silent, you say, I'm grown of late,  
Nor yield, as you do, to our fate?  
Ah! that alone is truly pain  
Of which we never can complain.

No, thou hast never griev'd, but I griev'd too;  
 Smiled thou hast often when no smile of mine  
 Could answer it. The sun himself can give  
 But little colour to the desert sands.

My hopes retire; my wishes as before  
 Struggle to find their resting-place in vain:  
 The ebbing sea thus beats against the shore;  
 The shore repels it; it returns again.

Mine fall, and yet a tear of hers  
 Would swell, not soothe their pain,  
 Ah! if she look but at these tears,  
 They do not fall in vain.

There are some tears we would not wish to dry,  
 And some that sting before they drop and die.  
 Ah! well may be imagined of the two  
 Which I would ask of Heaven may fall from you.  
 Such, ere th lover sinks into the friend,  
 On meeting cheeks in warm attraction blend.



While you, my love, are by,  
 How fast the moments fly!  
     Yet who could wish them slower?  
 Alas! to think ere long  
 Your converse and your song  
     Can reach my ear no more.  
 O let the thought too rest  
 Upon your gentle breast,  
     Where many kind ones dwell;  
 And then perhaps at least  
 I may partake a feast  
     None e'er enjoy'd so well.  
 Why runs in haste away  
 Such music, day by day,  
     When every little wave  
 Of its melodious rill  
 Would slake my thirst, until  
     I quench it in the grave.

*Love's Secrets*

Poplar! I will not write upon thy rind  
     lanthe's cherisht name,  
 Which it would grieve me should another find,  
     And the same station claim.

Ours, O lanthe, ours must never meet,  
     Tho' here we tarry long.  
 To hear the whisper of the leaves is sweet,  
     And that bird's even-song.

One sweeter I have bidden thee to check  
     In fear of passer by,  
 Who might have seen an arm about a neck;  
     So timorous am I.

## lix

Lie, my fond heart at rest,  
 She never can be ours.  
 Why strike upon my breast  
 The slowly passing hours?

Ah! breathe not out the name!  
 That fatal folly stay!  
 Conceal the eternal flame,  
 And tortured ne'er betray.

## lx

You smiled, you spoke, and I believed,  
 By every word and smile deceived.  
 Another man would hope no more;  
 Nor hope I what I hoped before:  
 But let not this last wish be vain;  
 Deceive, deceive me once again!

## lxi

I can not tell, not I, why she  
 Awhile so gracious, now should be  
 So grave: I can not tell you why  
 The violet hangs its head awry.  
 It shall be cull'd, it shall be worn,  
 In spite of every sign of scorn,  
 Dark look, and overhanging thorn.

## lxii

Ah! could I think there's nought of ill  
 In what you do, and love you still!  
 I have the power for only half,  
 My wish: you know it, and you laugh.

lxiii

*To Love*

Where is my heart, perfidious boy  
Give it, ah give it back again!  
I ask no more for hours of joy,  
Lift but thy arm and burst my chain.

“Fond man, the heart we idly gave  
She prizes not, yet won't restore:  
She passes on from slave to slave. .  
Go to . . thy heart is thine no more.”

lxiv

Little it interests me how  
Some insolent usurper now  
Divides your narrow chair;  
Little heed I whose hand is placed  
(No, nor how far) around your waist,  
Or paddles in your hair.  
A time, a time there may have been  
(Ah! and there was) when every scene  
Was brightened by your eyes.  
And dare you ask what you have done?  
My answer, take it, is but one . . .  
The weak have taught the wise.

lxv

Bid my bosom cease to grieve,  
Bid these eyes fresh objects see,  
Where's the comfort to believe  
None would once have rival'd me?  
What, my freedom to receive?  
Broken hearts, are they the free?  
For another can I live  
If I may not live for thee?

## lxvi

So late removed from him she swore,  
 With clasping arms and vows and tears,  
 In life and death she would adore,  
 While memory, fondness, bliss, endears.

Can she forswear? can she forget?  
 Strike, mighty Love! strike, Vengeance! Soft!  
 Conscience must come and bring regret . . .  
 These let her feel! . . . nor these too oft!

## lxvii

O fond, but fickle and untrue,  
 Ianthe take my last adieu.  
 Your heart one day will ask you why  
 You forced from me this farewell sigh.  
 Have you not feign'd that friends reprove  
 The mask of Friendship worn by Love?  
 Feign'd, that they whisper'd you should be  
 The same to others as to me?  
 Ah! little knew they what they said!  
 How would they blush to be obey'd!

Too swiftly roll'd the wheels when last  
 These woods and airy downs we past.  
 Fain would we trace the winding path,  
 And hardly wisht for blissful Bath.  
 At every spring you caught my arm,  
 And every pebble roll'd alarm.  
 On me was turn'd that face divine,  
 The view was on the right so fine:  
 I smiled . . . those conscious eyes withdrew. . .  
 The left was now the finer view.  
 Each trembled for detected wiles,  
 And blushes tinged with fading smiles.  
 But Love turns Terror into jest. . .  
 We laught, we kist, and we confest.  
 Laugh, kisses, confidence are past,  
 And Loves goes too . . . but goes the last.

## lxviii

Tears, and tears only, are these eyes that late  
 In thine could contemplate  
 Charms which, like stars, in swift succession rise  
 No longer to these eyes!  
 Love shows the place he flew from; there, bereft  
 Of motion, Grief is left.

## lxix

Proud word you never spoke, but you will speak  
 Four not exempt from pride some future day.  
 Resting on one white hand a warm wet cheek  
 Over my open volume you will say,  
 "This man loved *me!*" then rise and trip away.

## lxx

*Ask me not*, a voice severe  
 Tells me, *for it gives me pain.*  
 Peace! the hour, too sure, is near  
 When I can not ask again.

## lxxi

*Heart's-Ease*

There is a flower I wish to wear,  
 But not until first worn by you . . .  
 Heart's-ease . . . of all earth's flowers most rare;  
 Bring it; and bring enough for two.

## lxxii

On the smooth brow and clustering hair  
 Myrtle and rose! your wreath combine,  
 The duller olive I would wear,  
 Its constancy, its peace, be mine.

## lxxiii

There are some wishes that may start  
 Nor cloud the brow nor sting the heart.  
 Gladly then would I see how smiled  
 One who now fondles with her child;  
 How smiled she but six years ago,  
 Herself a child or nearly so.  
 Yes, let me bring before my sight  
 The silken tresses chain'd up tight,  
 The tiny fingers tipt with red  
 By tossing up the strawberry-bed;  
 Half-open lips, long violet eyes,  
 A little rounder with surprise,  
 And then (her chin against the knee)  
 "Mamma! who can that stranger be?  
 How grave the smile he smiles on me!"

## lxxiv

"Do you remember me? or are you proud?"  
 Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd crowd,  
 Ianthe said, and lookt into my eyes.  
 "A yes, a yes, to both: for Memory  
 Where you but once have been must ever be,  
 And at your voice Pride from his throne must  
 rise."

lxxv

*Called Proud*

If I am proud, you surely know,  
lanthe! who has made me so,  
And only should condemn the pride  
That can arise from aught beside.

lxxvi

*To the Countess de Molande*

I wonder not that Youth remains  
With you, wherever else she flies:  
Where could she find such fair domains,  
Where bask beneath such sunny eyes?

lxxvii

Years, many parti-colour'd years,  
Some have crept on, and some have flown  
Since first before me fell those tears  
I never could see fall alone.  
Years, not so many, are to come,  
Years not so varied, when from you  
One more will fall: when, carried home  
I see it not, nor hear *adieu*.

Maria! I have said *adieu*,  
 To one alone so fair as you;  
 And she, beyond my hopes, at last  
 Returns and tells me of the past;  
 While happier for remembering well  
 Am I to hear and she to tell.  
 Whether gay Paris may again  
 Admire you gayest of her train,  
 Or, Love for pilot, you shall go  
 Where Orellana's waters flow,  
 And cull, amid Brazilian bowers,  
 Of richer fruits and gaudier flowers;  
 Or on the Seine or on the Line  
 Remember one command of mine:  
 Love with as steady love as e'er  
 Illumed the only breast so fair;  
 That, in another year at most,  
 Whether the Alps or seas are crost,  
 Something may scatter from the flame  
 Fresh lustre o'er Pereira's name.

*Ianthe's Daughter*

To thee, Maria, now within thy tomb,  
 God seem'd to promise many years to come.  
 A gift beyond the rest to Him we owe,  
 He left one image of thee here below.



lxxx

Well I remember how you smiled  
To see me write your name upon  
The soft sea-sand . . . *O! what a child!*  
*You think you're writing upon stone!*  
I have since written what no tide  
Shall ever wash away, what men  
Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide  
And find lanthe's name again.

lxxxi

*To Ianthe*

We once were happier; true; but were  
Our happiest hours devoid of care?  
Remains there nothing like the past,  
But calmer and less overcast  
By clouds no effort could dispel,  
And hopes we neither dared to tell?  
I wish that hand were earlier free  
Which Love should have preserved for me.  
Content, if sad, I must be now  
With what the sparing Fates allow,  
And feel, tho' once the hope seem'd vain,  
There may be love that feels no pain.

*A Dreamer's Tale*

Dreamer I ever was by night and day.  
 Strange was the dream that on an upland bank  
 My horse and I were station'd, and I saw  
 By a late gleam of an October sun  
 The windows of a house wherein abode  
 One whom I loved, who loved me no less—  
 And was she not drawn back? and came not forth  
 Two manly forms which would impede her steps?  
 I was too distant for them to discern  
 My features, but they doubted: she retired;  
 Was it into her chamber? did she weep?  
 I did not know at that hour, but in the next  
 Silently flowed tear after tear profuse.  
 There are sweet flowers that only blow at night,  
 And sweet tears are there bursting then alone.

I turn'd the bridle back and rode away,  
 Nor saw her more until a lossen'd bond  
 Led her to find me a less happy man  
 Than she had left me, little happy then,  
 For hope had gone with her and not return'd.  
 She lookt into my eyes, fixt upon hers,  
 And said "You are not cheerful, tho' you say  
 How glad you are to see me here again.  
 Is there a grievance? I have heard there is,  
 And the false heart slips down and breaks the true;  
 I come to catch it first; give it me back;  
 Sweet fruit is no less sweet for being bruised."

Thus at brief intervals she spake and sigh'd;  
 I sigh'd, too, but spake not: she then pursued,  
 "Tell me, could it be you who came so far  
 Over the sea to catch a glance at one  
 You could not have? Rash creature! to incur  
 Such danger! was it you? I often walkt  
 Lonely and sad along that upland bank,  
 Until the dew fell heavy on my shawl,  
 And calls had reacht me more and more distinct,  
 Ah me! calls how less willingly obey'd  
 Than some I well remember not so loud."

## lxxxiii

No, my own love of other years!  
 No, it must never be.  
 Much rests with you that yet endears,  
 Alas! but what with me?  
 Could those bright years o'er me revolve  
 So gay, o'er you so fair,  
 The pearl of life we would dissolve  
 And each the cup might share.  
 You show that truth can ne'er decay,  
 Whatever fate befalls;  
 I, that the myrtle and the bay  
 Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

## lxxxiv

*To J. S.*

Many may yet recall the hours  
 That saw thy lover's chosen flowers  
 Nodding and dancing in the shade  
 Thy dark and wavy tresses made:  
 On many a brain is pictured yet  
 Thy languid eye's dim violet,  
 But who among them all foresaw  
 How the sad snows that never thaw  
 Upon that head one day should lie  
 And love but glimmer from that eye.

## lxxxv

Dull is my verse: not even thou  
 Who movest many cares away  
 From this lone breast and weary brow,  
 Canst make, as once, its fountain play;  
 No, nor those gentle words that now  
 Support my heart to hear thee say:  
 "The bird upon its lonely bough  
 Sings sweetest at the close of day."

lxxxvi

*To the Comtesse de Molande, about  
to Marry the Duc de Luxembourg*

Say ye that years roll on and ne'er return?  
Say ye the Sun who leaves them all behind,  
Their great creator, can not bring one back  
With all his force, tho' he draw worlds around?  
Witness me, little streams that meet before  
My happy dwelling; witness Africo  
And Mensola! that ye have seen at once  
Twenty roll back, twenty as swift and bright  
As are your swiftest and your brightest waves,  
When the tall cypress o'er the Doccia  
Hurls from his inmost boughs the latent snow.  
Go, and go happy, light of my past days,  
Consoler of my present! thou whom Fate  
Alone could sever from me! One step higher  
Must yet be mounted, high as was the last:  
Friendship with faltering accent says "Depart,  
And take the highest seat below the crown'd."

lxxxvii

*To Ianthe in Advancing Age*

The violets of thine eyes are faded,  
[Surviving] ill their radiant noon,  
Nor will thy steps move on unaided  
By friendly arm, alas! how soon.

Well I remember whose it was  
They sought; no help they wanted then;  
Methinks I see the maidens pass  
In envy, and in worse the men.

lxxxviii

*To Ianthe Growing Old*

For me you wish you could retain  
The charms of youth; the wish is vain,  
Ianthe! Let it now suffice  
To pick our way with weaker eyes:  
They cannot light it as of yore  
Where Pleasure's sparkling fount ran o'er.  
Time spares not Beauty, Love he spares,  
Who covers with his wing grey hairs.

lxxxix

*On the Death of Ianthe*

I dare not trust my pen, it trembles so,  
It seems to feel a portion of my woe,  
And makes me credulous that trees and stones  
At mournful fates have utter'd mournful tones.  
While I look back again on days long past  
How gladly would I yours might be my last.  
Sad our first severance was, but sadder this,  
When death forbids one hour of mutual bliss.

*The Death in Paris of Jane Sophia,  
Countess de Molande*

Tears! are they tears indeed?  
And can the dead heart bleed?  
Suffering so long, so much,  
O heart! I thought no touch  
Of pain could reach thee more!  
Alas! the thought is o'er.

I will wipe off the tear  
That falls not on her bier  
Who would have wept o'er mine.  
Ah me! that form divine  
Above my reach must rest  
And make the blest more blest.

*June '51*

Versailles! Versailles! thou shalt not keep  
Her whom this heart yet holds most dear:  
In her own country she shall sleep;  
Her epitaph be graven here.

Mild is the parting year, and sweet  
The odour of the falling spray;  
Life passes on more rudely fleet,  
And balmless is its closing day.  
I wait its close, I court its gloom,  
But mourn that never must there fall  
Or on my breast or on my tomb  
The tear that would have sooth'd it all.

## Notes

The variations in spelling are Landor's; for he had his own theories about orthography. See his imaginary conversation between Archdeacon Hare and Landor in *Last Fruit off an Old Tree*.

The following are the numbers in this edition of the poems addressed to Ianthe published in *Gebir, Count Julian, and other Poems, 1831*:

1831	Present edition	1831	Present edition
i	lxiii	xvii	xxii
ii	xx	xviii	l
iii	i	xix	xliv
iv	lxx	xx	xxiii
v	xiii	xxi	vii
vi	xxviii	xxii	xxxI
vii	lxv	xxiii	xxvi
viii	xl	xiv	xxxix
ix	xxxiv	xxv	xxi
x	xi	xxvi	li
xi	xxv	xxvii	lxvi
xii	vi	xxviii	lxvii
xiii	xxxviii	xxix	xxvii
xiv	v	xxx	xxxvi
xv	xii	xxxi	xcii
xvi	xvi		

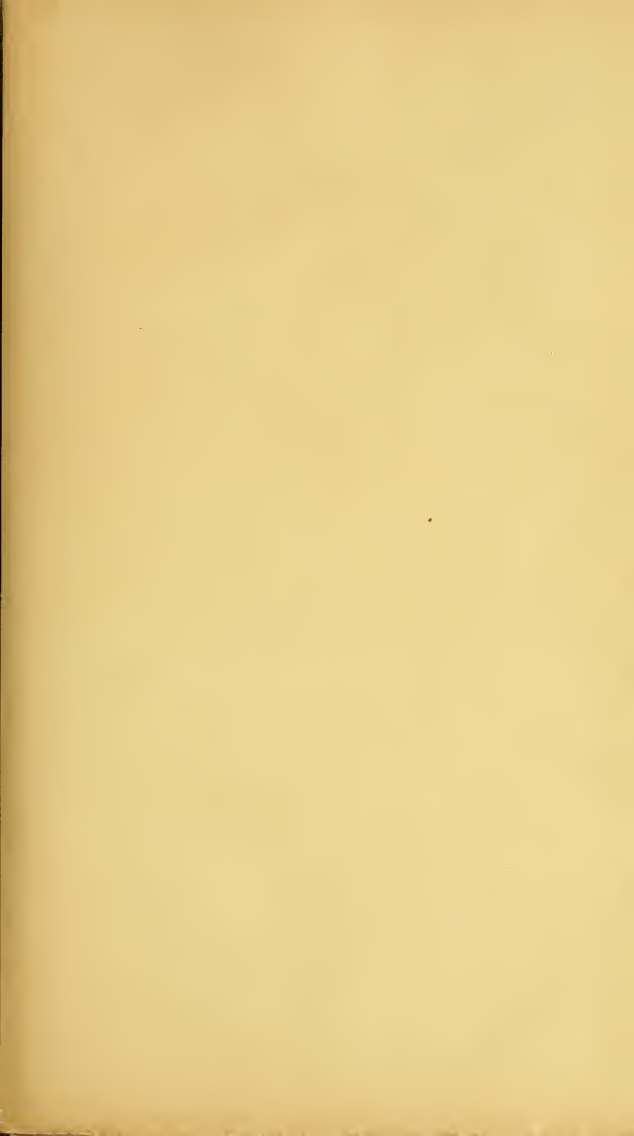
ii, iii—The reference is probably to Byron who used the name Ianthe as a poetical name for Lady Ann Harley. Shelley named his daughter Ianthe.

lxviii, lxxix—Maria, Ianthe's daughter, married Chevalier Louis de Pereira Sodre, the Brazilian Minister at the Vatican, in 1835. She died in 1836.

lxxxvi—See account of Ianthe in the Introduction.

Here endeth the Book of Ianthe written by  
Walter Savage Landor and edited by Finley M. K.  
Foster and printed by The Craftsmen of Kells at  
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of March in the Year of our Lord MDCCCXXII.

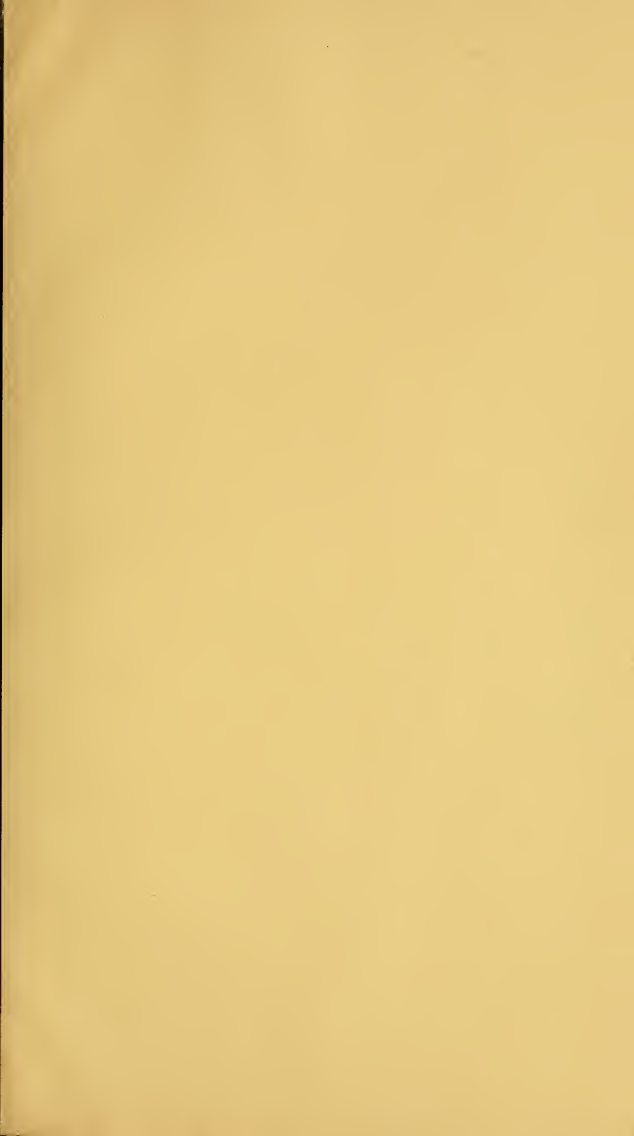








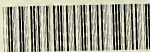








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